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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents a summary of the results of a survey of 1,000 Texan families with children under 6 years of age. The survey (commissioned by the Texas Department of Community Affairs in 1973) was conducted to gather data on families (e.g., age, income level, and education of parents), the health and development of children, and child care arrangements. Some of the noteworthy findings which emerged from the data are: (1) 74% of families with children under 6 in Texas have moved in the last 5 years; (2) 54% of Texan families with children under 6 live in poverty or borderline poverty; (3) 97% of the fathers and 40% of the mothers of children under 6 work; (4) 41% of the mothers and 35% of the father with children under 6 in Texas have not completed high school; (5) 7 of every 8 single parent families live in poverty; (6) almost 1 in every 3 families have no health insurance; (7) about 33% of all children under 6 are in some kind of child care arrangement; and (8) the most frequently mentioned wishes mothers had for their children were good health, education, and a happy life. Included are discussion questions and data tables. (BRT)

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Texas' Youngest Children

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November 1975

Texas' Youngest Children

**Texas household survey
of families with children
under six.**

Preface

This booklet is a summary presentation of the highlights of a household survey commissioned in 1973 by the Office of Early Childhood Development, Texas Department of Community Affairs, to determine the status of Texas families with young children under six.

The information in this publication is designed to stimulate discussion about the needs of young children and their families and promote examination of alternative methods of meeting those needs. The booklet may be used by parents, teachers, service clubs, churches, schools, neighborhood organizations, local governments or any individual or group interested and concerned about Texas' youngest children. Discussion questions have been provided at the end of the report to generate discussion and further study.

A longer, technical report of the findings of the Household Survey is available for researchers and others who may wish to explore the findings in greater depth.

The future of a state or a nation is as strong as its children and the parents who nourish them. We hope that these publications will be an incentive for communities to strive harder to assure that Texas will be a place where families can rear happy and healthy children.

**Texas'
Youngest
Children**

Introduction

Early childhood—that stage of life between birth and about six years of age—has gained increasing attention in Texas and in the rest of the nation over the past several years. That attention stems largely from two developments: (1) a widespread public concern about what is happening to and within the family in America, and (2) the expanding body of scientific knowledge about how children grow and learn.

Mounting Pressures On Families

Many Texas families face mounting pressures, such as a rising cost of living, job insecurity and urbanization. These pressures are causing members of families to spend less time together and even to break apart. Modern life has hastened the demise of the extended family -- nearby grandparents, aunts and uncles -- thus thrusting more responsibilities solely on parents. Many preschool children in Texas are being reared by only one parent. Many spend most of their waking hours in someone else's care while one or both parents work.

Parents--Important Influence

At the same time, researchers and policy makers continue to reaffirm what has been believed for centuries -- that the family is the most effective context within which to rear children. Studies are pointing to the effects which early physical, emotional, social, and intellectual experiences have on later life. Consistently, through these experiences, parents are seen as the most important influence on the child's life.

Social Disorders Backtracked Into Childhood

The implication for social policy is that sound early childhood experiences buttressed by a cohesive family help pave the way for normal, productive adult life. Early childhood is seen by many as the starting point for preventing many of the problems which rift our society now. A policy of prevention begins with informed, caring parents; a happy stimulating family life; and early detection and treatment of disorders.

At the national level, Federal programs have been developed to provide preschool enrichment opportunities for children of low-income families. Much thought is being given to changes in the welfare system so that it may help families break out of the poverty-unemployment-welfare cycle. Children's interest groups have sprung up to work for quality in day care and to serve children with special needs.

New Consciousness of Children's Interests

In Texas, the Legislature has passed a comprehensive special education program for children as young as age three, expanded kindergarten to all five-year-olds, and reformed the child care licensing law. More Texans are reporting child abuse as the result of a massive information campaign. Young couples are attending community classes on childbirth and child care.

Texas' Interest in Young Children.

Increased attention to the needs of young children in Texas was the impetus behind the creation of the Office of Early Childhood Development in the Texas Department of Community Affairs in 1971. That Office, now called the Early Childhood Development Division, was directed by the Governor to gather information on the conditions of children under six and their families. That information was considered necessary to assist in identifying the needs of young children and then to provide a basis for state policy affecting Texas children and their families.

The Office of Early Childhood Development began to collect information from a variety of sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Department of Labor, the State Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Statistics, and the Texas Nutrition Survey of 1968-69. It soon became apparent that most of the state agencies serving young children collected little data on the young child. The information that was collected often failed to

Gaps in Information

distinguish between children under six and older children. In addition, the available information had limited usefulness because it failed to identify the family and environmental context out of which it was drawn.

Household Survey Commissioned

For these and other reasons, the Office of Early Childhood Development commissioned a statewide survey in 1973. The survey sought demographic data, such as age, income level, and education of parents; information about the child's health and development; and information about child care arrangements.

Some of the initial survey findings were reported in "Texas Survey of Child Care, Health, and Developmental Characteristics of Children Under Six", a paper presented at the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans on October 24, 1974. Other findings were included in The Darker Side of Childhood: 46 Things You Need to Know About Texas Children published by the Office of Early Childhood Development in November 1974. This publication and the longer technical report will present a complete report of major findings and the analysis of those findings to date.

More Analyses Needed

The analysis of the data is by no means exhaustive. We hope the publication of some survey results will be the starting point for more analyses that will lead to recommendations for strengthening family life and improving programs for Texas children and their families in the future.

**Texas'
Youngest
Children**

Survey of 1,000 Texas Families

In June 1973, the Office of Early Childhood Development commissioned a University of Texas at Austin research team to conduct a door-to-door in-depth survey of families with children under six. Office staff and several researchers from various early childhood development disciplines designed the survey instrument to assure that the questions were targeted toward the areas where information was needed, such as familial characteristics, health status, and child care arrangements.

The 1,000 families surveyed were chosen to be representative of the state as a whole, with the proper proportion of the sample being allocated to urban and rural, ethnic, and income characteristics. Respondents were not selected to be representative of their counties of residence. Age distribution of children in the sample, as indicated in Table 1, was representative of the total state distribution of children under six.

Representative of State as a Whole

The findings reported here and in the longer technical report represent a start in analyzing the wealth of data produced by the survey. The Early Childhood Development Division welcomes continued analysis by early childhood development researchers and social scientists in related fields, and will provide them with access to the raw data from the survey.

A Starting Point

Each reader's understanding of a report is illuminated by his experience and knowledge. Readers of this report will probably see something significant in the data that may not have been highlighted by report writers. In addition, there is considerable exploration and interpretation which was not a part of the analysis. The Early Childhood Development Division hopes that Texas citizens who study the reports of the Household Survey will raise questions and concerns with others, suggest further analysis of the data, and make that new information available to other interested Texans. Informed policy decisions must take into account the desires and dreams that

parents have for their children; their fears and frustrations, as well as, their children's needs for health care, child care, and other social services. Some of the information to assist in considering those decisions is in the pages of this report.

Table 1

Distribution of Children Under Six Surveyed
by Age of Child

Age of Child	Percent of Total
Less than One Year Old	17%
One Year Old	20%
Two Years Old	18%
Three Years Old	16%
Four Years Old	16%
Five Years Old	13%
Total	100%

**Texas'
Youngest
Children**

Family Profile

Common or noteworthy characteristics of Texas families with children under six emerge from the data. Among these characteristics:

- **Families were mobile.**

Seventy-four percent moved at least once during the previous five years.

- **Families too often were poor.**

More than half (54 percent) of Texas families with children under six (representing 60 percent of the children under six) lived in conditions of poverty or borderline poverty¹.

- **Parents were hardworking.**

Ninety-seven percent of the fathers worked in 1973; 41 percent of these fathers worked longer than a 40-hour week. Forty percent of the mothers worked; 12 percent of these mothers worked longer than a 40-hour week.

- **Many parents had limited education.**

Forty-one percent of the mothers and 35 percent of the fathers had not completed high school.

- **One-parent families were raising children under unusually stressful circumstances.**

Seven of every eight single parent families lived in poverty or borderline poverty.

Economic Status

Parents' Employment

Parents' Education

Single Parent Families

¹Office of Economic Opportunity (now the Community Services Administration) Poverty Guidelines, Instructions 6004D, June 7, 1973.

Health Care and Nutrition

- Many families were not covered by health insurance.

More than 345,000 Texas families with children under six did not have access to third-party payment health care.

Child Care Arrangements

- Many families needed care arrangements for their children outside the home.

When parents worked, some type of child care arrangements for 450,000 preschool children was essential.

- Mothers wanted basics of life for their children.

The most frequently mentioned wishes mothers had for their children were good health, education, and a happy life.

Economic Status

The average annual income of Texas families with children under six was between \$6,000 and \$6,500 in 1973. The survey indicated that one-third of the families with children under six in Texas had an annual income of less than \$5,000 per year. Table 2 presents the specific breakdowns according to income.

Fifty-four percent of the families lived in poverty² or borderline poverty³. However, the survey indicated that more than half of the children in Texas (six of every ten children) lived in conditions of poverty or borderline poverty.

Table 2

Distribution of Income Levels of Families
with Children Under Six

Family Income Level (Annual)	Percent of Families with Children Under Six
Less than \$2,000	9%
\$2,000 - \$5,000	24%
\$5,001 - \$10,000	30%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	22%
Over \$15,000	15%
Total	100%

²Poverty indicates the family economic status is at or below the poverty level.

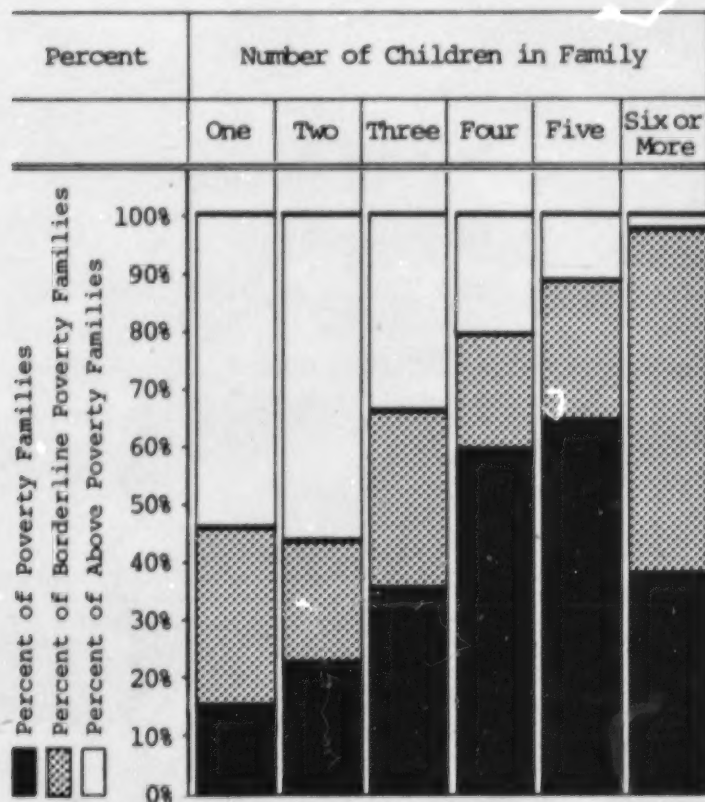
³Borderline poverty indicates the family economic status is less than 100 percent above the poverty level.

Larger Families, More Poverty

Generally, the larger the families, the more they tended toward poverty. As Figure 1 shows, among families with six or more children, only two of 100 were not living in poverty or borderline poverty conditions. In contrast, 53 of 100 children from a one- or two-child family lived above poverty⁴.

Figure 1

Relationship Between Poverty and
Borderline Poverty Classifications
and the Number of Children in the Family*



*"Number of children in family" includes children under six and other related children in family

⁴Above poverty indicates the family economic status is more than 100 percent above the poverty level.

Parents' Employment

The survey indicates that 97 percent of all fathers (one- and two-parent families) worked sometime during 1973. Forty percent of all mothers worked during the same year (Table 3).

Table 3

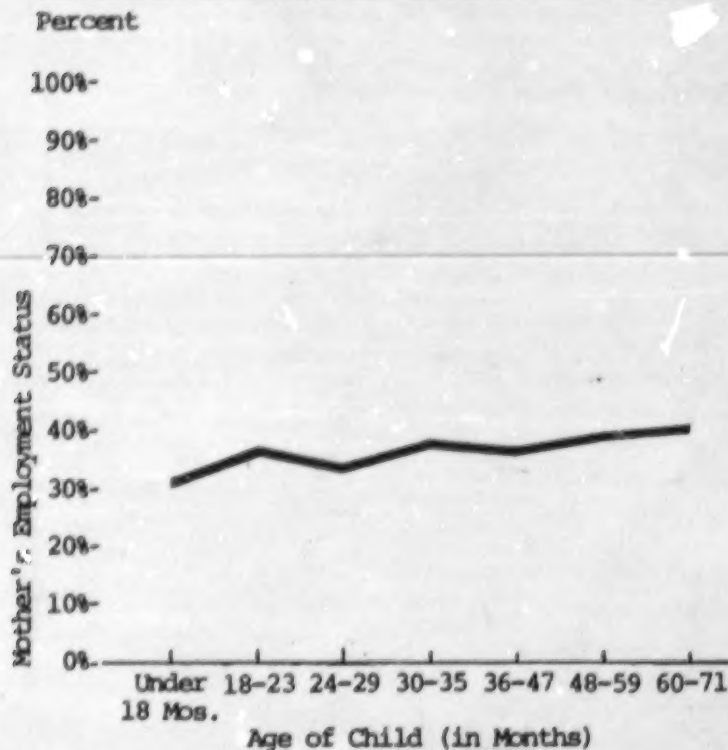
Distribution of Fathers and Mothers
of Children Under Six by Employment Status
of Fathers and Mothers

Employment Status	Fathers	Mothers
Employed	97%	40%
Not Employed	3%	60%
Total	100%	100%

Working mothers had 36 percent or 450,000 children under six. As Figure 2 indicates, there is a gradual increase in mothers who are employed as the age of the child increases. But, it is interesting to note that there were large numbers of children less than 18 months of age (100,000) with working mothers.

Figure 2

Relationship Between Mother's Employment
Status and Age of Child Under Six



Parents Worked Full-time

Among these families with young children, fathers worked longer hours per week than mothers. Ninety-five percent of the employed fathers worked 40 hours or more per week, while 73 percent of the employed mothers worked 40 hours or more (Table 4). Almost three of every four working mothers had full-time jobs.

Table 4

Distribution of Working Fathers and Working Mothers with Children Under Six by Number of Hours Worked Per Week

Hours Worked Per Week	Fathers	Mothers
Less than 40 Hours	5%	27%
40 Hours	54%	61%
More than 40 Hours	41%	12%
Total	100%	100%

Eighty-four percent of the mothers who were employed worked to supplement family income (57 percent) or to support the family (27 percent). Ten percent of the working mothers listed "enjoyment of work" as their reason for employment outside the home. Above poverty children had mothers who stated they worked for enjoyment more often than did mothers of poverty and borderline poverty children. Table 5 presents the distribution of working mothers by mothers' major reason for working in 1973.

Reasons Mothers Employed

As indicated in Table 6, the mother's employment did have an effect on the economic status of the family. But, despite the contribution of the mother's employment, 54 percent of the children whose mothers worked were living in poverty or borderline poverty.

Working Mothers' Contribution

Table 5

Distribution of Working Mothers
with Children Under Six
by Mother's Reason for Employment

Reason Mother Employed	Percent of Employed Mothers
Mother Supplements Family Income	50%
Mother Supports the Family	27%
Mother Enjoys Working	10%
Mother Wants to Get Out of House	3%
Family Saving for Something Special	3%
Total	100%

Table 6

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Family Economic Status and
by Mother's Employment Status

Mother's Employment Status	Family Economic Status			Total
	Poverty	Borderline Poverty	Above Poverty	
Employed	26%	28%	46%	100%
Not Employed	34%	29%	37%	100%

The 3 percent of all fathers who didn't work at the time of the survey gave these reasons for not working "inability to find a job", "poor health", or "student status".

No Employment Status

The reasons given most frequently for the non-working status of mothers was "parent wants to care for child herself", "parent does not want to work", and "husband does not want wife to work".

Parents' Education

Forty-one percent of the mothers and 35 percent of the fathers with children under six had not completed high school (Table 7).

Table 7

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Educational Attainment of Fathers and Mothers

Educational Attainment	Percent of Fathers	Percent of Mothers
Less than 6th Grade	15%	14%
7th to 9th Grade	10%	13%
10th to 11th Grade	10%	14%
High School Graduate	23%	30%
College (13-16 Years)	29%	26%
Graduate School (More than 16 Years)	13%	3%
Total	100%	100%

The mean years of education for fathers was 12 — high school graduation — compared to 11 years for mothers.

More Education,
More Often Employed

Employed mothers usually had a higher educational attainment than mothers who were not employed. Almost half of the mothers who had completed high school or who had some college courses were employed in 1973 (Table 8). Only one-fourth of the mothers who had not graduated from high school were employed.

The more educated mothers had fewer preschool children. More than a third (35 percent) of the children with mothers who had not graduated from high school had two or more

Table 8

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Mother's Educational Attainment
and by Mother's Employment Status

Mother's Employment Status	Mother's Educational Attainment				
	6th Grade or Less	7-11th Grade	High School Grad	College	Graduate School
Employed	27%	26%	44%	42%	54%
Not Employed	73%	74%	56%	58%	46%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

brothers or sisters under six years of age. Of the children whose mothers had at least a high school education, 8 percent had two or more brothers or sisters under six years of age (Table 9).

More Education,
Fewer Preschool Children

Table 9

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Mother's Educational Attainment and by
Number of Children Under Six in Family

Children Under Six in Family	Mother's Educational Attainment	
	Less than High School Graduation	High School Graduation or Above
Two or Less	65%	92%
Three or More	35%	8%
Total	100%	100%

Single Parent Families

Twelve of every 100 families with children under six in Texas were single parent families. These single parents were usually young, had several preschool children, and worked outside the home. The responsibilities inherent in parenting are doubled for the single parent. They must provide partial or total economic support, as well as, intellectual, emotional, and physical support for the children.

For every 12 single parents out of 100, one was widowed, four divorced, three separated from spouse, and four had never been married.

One Parent,
Several Children

The single parent homes were not always one child homes. Five percent of the preschool children living in families with four children under six had one parent. Ten percent of the children with three siblings had only one parent.

Single Parent Families, Poor

Seven of every eight single parent families lived in poverty or borderline poverty. Sixty-five percent of the children from single parent families lived in poverty and 23 percent in borderline poverty. This contrasted with the two-parent families, in which 27 percent of the children lived in poverty and 30 percent in borderline poverty (Table 10).

Young, Poor, Alone

Young mothers (less than Age 20) were concentrated in the single parent category. Among children with only one parent, one in eight had a mother less than 20 years old. This compares to children with two parents, among whom one in 20 had a mother under 20 years old (Table 11).

Table 10

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Marital Status of Parents
and by Family Economic Status

Family Economic Status	Marital Status of Parents	
	Married	Single
Poverty	27%	65%
Borderline Poverty	30%	23%
Above Poverty	43%	12%
Total	100%	100%

Table 11

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Marital Status of Parents
and by Age of Mother

Age of Mother	Marital Status of Parents	
	Married	Single
Under 20 Years	5%	13%
20-34 Years	81%	76%
Over 34 Years	14%	11%
Total	100%	100%

A higher percentage of single mothers than mothers in two-parent families were employed. Almost half the children from single parent families had working mothers compared with one in three from two-parent families (Table 12).

Table 12

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Marital Status of Parents
and by Employment Status of Mother

Mother's Employment Status	Marital Status of Parents	
	Married	Single
Employed	34%	48%
Not Employed	66%	52%
Total	100%	100%

Health Care and Nutrition

Overall indications were that most young children in Texas received regular medical care before and after birth and were generally healthy. Most mothers received prenatal care during pregnancy. Ninety-three percent of all children had mothers who saw a doctor during pregnancy while 7 percent of the children had mothers who did not (Table 13). Although many questions about the health status of children were asked (ear and eye problems, sickness in two weeks prior to interview, hospitalization), most mothers reported few health problems.

Table 13

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Times Mother Saw Doctor During
Pregnancy

Times Saw Doctor	Percent of Mothers
None	7%
One	1%
2 - 5	4%
3 - 9	24%
10 - 15	36%
16 - 20	6%
More than 20	2%
Unknown	20%
Total	100%

Two Peaks in Doctor Visits

Visits to the doctor hit two peaks for young children--in the first year of life and again at age five years. More than two-thirds of the children less than a year old had seen a doctor within the month prior to the interview. The increase in frequency of visits to doctors at age five probably reflects the fact that children in Texas are required to present a health clearance statement and immunization certificate before entering school.

There were a few noteworthy findings which may have some implication on the future health status of these preschool children:

Immunization Status

Mothers reported that approximately 10 percent of the children under six had received no immunizations and an additional 24 percent had incomplete immunization records.

Families Without Health Insurance

Almost one in three (31 percent) Texas families had no health insurance, indicating that more than 345,000 families did not have access to third-party payment health care. A higher percentage of above poverty families than poverty families had health insurance coverage for their children. Forty-three percent of the poverty children were covered by health insurance; 89 percent of the above poverty children were covered.

Six percent or 75,000 Texas preschoolers ate no breakfast. An additional seven percent of these children ate breakfast at a child care center or some other type of care arrangement, and 86 percent of the children ate breakfast at home (Table 14).

Breakfast Patterns of Young Children

Table 14

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Place Where Breakfast Served

Place Breakfast Served	Percent of Children
No Breakfast	6%
Breakfast at Home	86%
Breakfast at School or Child Care Facility	7%
Breakfast at Home and at School or Child Care Facility	<u>1%</u>
Total	100%

Child Care Arrangements

Of the state's 1.25 million children under age six in 1973⁵, 33 percent or 412,500 were in a child care arrangement⁶. The percent of children in care peaked at five years of age. The child care arrangements were usually informal⁷ rather than formal⁸. Twenty percent of all care arrangements were of no cost to the parents. When there was cost involved, 96 percent of those care arrangements were paid for by the parents. Parents were by and large satisfied with their children's care arrangements.

⁵An Early Childhood Development Division estimate. The National Planning Association, Washington, D.C., estimate for 1973 population of children under six was 1,262,000, making these estimates of total children conservative.

⁶Child care arrangement is the care and supervision of a child on a regular basis for periods of less than 24 hours by a person or persons other than the child's own parents or guardian. Includes both formal and informal arrangements.

⁷Informal child care is care provided in the child's own home by a relative or non-relative or care provided in the home of a relative or non-relative, other than parents or guardian.

⁸Formal care is care provided in day care homes, day care centers, nursery schools, public or private kindergartens and first grades, and Head Start programs.

Several factors influenced whether a child was in a child care arrangement: the number of parents in the family, the employment status of the mother, and the reason the mother worked.

Influences on Care Arrangements

Children in one-parent families were placed in child care arrangements more often than children in two-parent families (Table 15).

Table 15

Distribution of Children Under Six
by Number of Parents and by
Care Arrangement

Number of Parents	Care Arrangement	
	Parent Care Arrangement*	Child Care Arrangement
One	8%	18%
Two	92%	82%
Total	100%	100%

*Parent care arrangement is care provided by the parents or guardian.

A higher percentage of children with working mothers were in a child care arrangement than children whose mothers did not work. In 1973, of the 412,500 children under six in child care arrangements, 334,000 or 81 percent of them had working mothers.

"Latch-Key" Children

However, 13 percent of the children with working mothers had no child care arrangement while their mother worked (Table 16). In reviewing the data on each of those children, it was found that 6 percent were left alone to supervise themselves or were "latch-key" children. The other 7 percent were receiving care of questionable quality. These children either stayed with the parent at work, were cared for at home by a disabled father, or by parents working different shifts, leaving the child with a sleeping parent. Sixty-five percent of the children with working mothers were in child care arrangements because they had mothers who were working to support the family (25 percent) or to supplement the family income (40 percent).

Table 16

Distribution of Children Under Six
in Child Care Arrangements
by Mother's Employment Status
and by Care Arrangement

Mother's Employment Status	Care Arrangement	
	Parent Care Arrangement	Child Care Arrangement
Employed	13%	82%
Not Employed	87%	18%
Total	100%	100%

Sixty-six percent of all children under six were not in a child care arrangement. The most frequent reasons given by parents for a child not being in a child care arrangement was that the mother did not work (56 percent), the parents wanted to care for their own child (22 percent), day care was too costly (5 percent), and no care was close by (3 percent).

Reasons for Parent Care

The survey also examined the types of child care arrangements (formal or informal), where the care was provided, how long the child was in care, and what caused variation in those care arrangements.

Of the children in child care arrangements, 65 percent were in informal care, 33 percent in formal care, and 2 percent unknown. A higher percentage of children from two-parent families than children from one-parent families were in parent care arrangements indicating that in two-parent families the mother was more likely to stay at home with the children (Table 17).

Informal Care, More Popular

Table 17

Distribution of Children Under Six in Care Arrangements by Number of Parents and by Type of Care

Type of Care	Number of Parents	
	One	Two
Formal	20%	17%
Informal	30%	12%
Parent Care	50%	71%
Total	100%	100%

Formal, Informal Care

Formal care arrangements were usually in day care centers (11 percent) or nursery schools (12 percent), with day care homes, kindergartens (public and private), Head Start programs, and first grades (public and private) having much smaller percentages of children. Informal care arrangements were usually in the home of relatives (27 percent) or in the home of non-relatives (21 percent) with care in own home by relative or non-relative having much smaller percentages of children.

Hours in Care

Fifty percent of the children in child care arrangements spent between 31 and 40 hours per week in care. Another 21 percent

Table 18

Distribution of Children Under Six
in Child Care Arrangements by
Hours Per Week in Arrangements and
by Mother's Employment Status

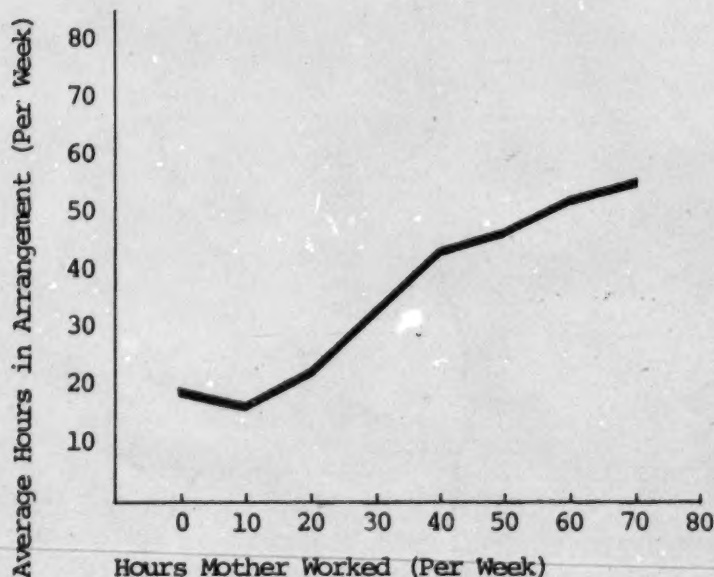
Hours Per Week in Arrangement	Mother's Employment Status	
	Employed	Not Employed
5 or Less	3%	13%
6-15	4%	35%
16-25	11%	15%
26-35	9%	14%
36-43	52%	14%
44 or More	21%	9%
Total	100%	100%

spent more than 40 hours per week in a child care arrangement.

The hours per week a child spent in a child care arrangement were related to the employment status of the mother and the number of hours per week the mother worked. A higher percentage of children with employed mothers than children whose mothers were not employed were in a child care arrangement longer than 35 hours per week (Table 18). For children with employed mothers, the average number of hours spent in a child care arrangement increased as the number of hours the mother worked increased (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Relationship Between Average Hours
Per Week Child in Child Care Arrangement
and Hours Per Week Mother Worked



Little Variation in Arrangements

There was little variation⁹ in child care arrangements. Ninety-four percent of all children in child care arrangements had only one such arrangement. The amount of variation, when it occurred, was associated with the time of day of the arrangement, the number of parents in the family, and the employment status of the mother. Care arrangements extending from morning through evening had more variation than arrangements at any other time span of the day.

Usually children in child care arrangements from families with one parent had less variation in their care arrangements than children from two-parent families (Table 19).

Table 19

Distribution of Children Under Six in Child Care Arrangements by Number of Parents and by Variation in Arrangements

Variation	Number of Parents	
	One	Two
None	99%	92%
Some	1%	8%
Total	100%	100%

⁹Variation is the number of different child care arrangements for the same child during one day; "no variation" means same arrangement, "some variation" means two arrangements or more.

Children whose mothers worked usually had the same arrangement all the time (Table 20). There appeared to be no relationship between the number of hours the mother worked and variation in the child care arrangements.

Table 20

Distribution of Children Under Six
in Child Care Arrangements by Variation
in Arrangements and Mother's Employment Status

Mother's Employment Status	Variation in Arrangement	
	No Variation	Variation
Employed	84%	52%
Not Employed	16%	48%
Total	100%	100%

Five percent of all children were not in some type of care arrangement because "day care was too costly". As stated earlier, most Texas families paid for their own children's care arrangements. The average cost for children in child care arrangements per child per week was \$12.80, including "no cost" arrangements¹⁰ or \$15.59, including "cost only" arrangements¹¹. Table 21 shows the average cost for care provided in seven locations and the percent of children in each location.

Cost Important Factor

¹⁰"No cost" arrangement is a care arrangement provided at no cost to the parents.

¹¹"Cost only" arrangement is a care arrangement which is paid for in part or full by the parent.

Table 21

Distribution of Children Under Six
in Child Care Arrangements by the
Average Cost Per Week and by
Place Care Provided

Place of Care	Average Cost Per Week*	Children in Care
Day Care Center	\$13.44	13%
Day Care Home	\$16.29	4%
Nursery School	\$14.02	12%
Home of Relative	\$ 6.80	29%
Home of Non-Relative	\$14.57	24%
Own Home by Relative	\$ 8.50	10%
Own Home by Non-Relative	<u>\$18.13</u>	<u>8%</u>
Total	-	100%

*Average cost per week includes "no cost arrangements" because there was no difference in the cost of an arrangement when compared to the place of the arrangement, except for care by relative in own home or child's home.

The most expensive care was in the child's own home by a non-relative; an average of \$18.13 per week. However, if care was provided in the child's own home by a relative, the cost was cut in half—an average of \$8.50.

The cost of care was related to the family economic status and the place where the care was provided. The average amount spent per week for child care increased as the family economic level increased. The average cost per week per child in poverty was \$9.49, for borderline poverty it was \$11.17, and for above poverty children it was \$14.01.

Effects on Cost

The least expensive care, other than parent care, was provided by relatives. Children in child care arrangements where there was no cost to the parent were usually cared for in the home of a relative or in their own home by a relative.

Overall, 87 percent of the children in a child care arrangement had parents who were satisfied with the arrangement. Parents were less satisfied with formal arrangements (8 percent) than with informal arrangements (5 percent). The most frequent reasons for dissatisfaction were: "need better quality care", "need more formal care", and "care is too far from home".

Parents Satisfied with Care

**Texas'
Youngest
Children**

Discussion Questions

1. Poverty in early childhood is frequently accompanied by inadequate nutrition, a lack of proper health care, crowded housing, limited educational opportunities and lack of intellectual stimulation. To what extent should the public be concerned about the effects of these debilitating conditions on children?
2. The income statistics were collected in 1973. How have economic conditions changed? What has been their impact on the family unit?
3. Should employers be encouraged to provide more flexibility to working parents for arranging family responsibilities?
 - More flexible work hours?
 - More part-time jobs?
 - Release time for family crises (sickness, doctor appointments)?
4. Other studies have shown that parental education is related to the quality of the early home environment of the child and to the values and attitudes that are instilled in the child. What implications do the survey results about the educational level of parents have on the well-being of young children and future families?
5. The stresses on family life for single parents are particularly intense. What, if anything, can be done to ease them? By whom?

-
6. What can (should) employers or community agencies do to assist single working parents when their child is ill or has special needs?
 7. From the survey, there is indication that the health status of most preschool children in Texas is adequate. Is this true from your experience?
 8. What implications does the relative lack of health insurance among poor families with young children have on the current debate about national health insurance?
 9. Federal law now requires that an "environmental impact" study be carried out before certain construction projects are undertaken. It has been suggested that a "family impact" study be undertaken before major actions are instituted by government or private employers which may affect families. What do you think?
 10. What are the long-term implications of the findings related to child care in light of:
 - the rising costs of care?
 - the apparent economic necessity for child care availability?
 11. What further questions or concerns does the information given raise for you?
 12. What action on the part of concerned citizens do you recommend?

**Texas'
Youngest
Children**

Beyond These Highlights

This publication has only summarized the major findings. The longer technical report will only show what data was gathered by the Household Survey and will identify possible relationships between some of the variables measured by the survey.

Multiple and complex relationships are still to be explored. Many more questions may be asked of the data using sophisticated statistical techniques such as multiple linear regression and multiple discriminant analysis.

Also many questions were asked during the interview that do not appear in the analysis of the data in this summary or in the longer report. Other questions were only partially analyzed. For example, mothers were asked questions about their pregnancy history and their child's developmental history. Some of the findings from the developmental questions will be in the longer document, but no analysis on pregnancy history of the mothers has been done.

The analyzed materials can now be compared with findings of other research--including findings of similar studies in other states and with national statistics.

There are undoubtedly ways to build upon the data, expand its usefulness, and keep the data current. It is our belief that more mining of the survey's rich lodes can be rewarding to researchers, useful to planners, and helpful to Texas' youngest children and their families. We welcome your suggestions.

**Texas'
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